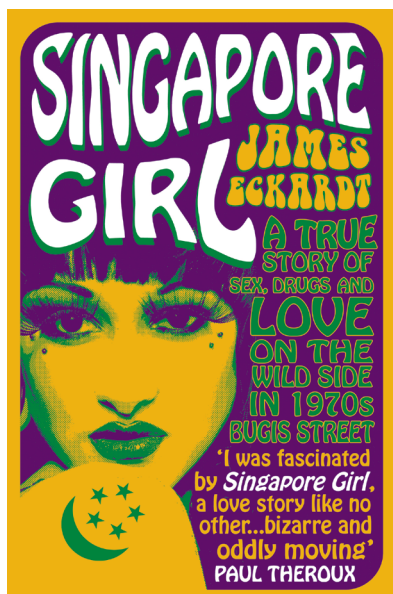


Film Pitch

Singapore Girl

TAGLINE	'Bugis Street Blues' ... a true story of sex, drugs and love on the wild side in 1970s Singapore
LOGLINE	When an American in 1970s Singapore loses his Tamil sweetheart, Milly, a transsexual prostitute in the then world-famous Bugis Street, to 'the Frenchman', he pens a drug-induced memoir to win her back. He fails and loses her forever, but years later an email arrives and a touching backstory unfolds, one that crosses Europe and reaches its tragic climax in the HDB heartlands of Singapore.
GENRE	Drama
SUBJECT	Bugis Street and social acceptance
THEMES	Love, loss, gender, society
TOPE	What starts out as the carefree romance of a lifetime in a more raucous but innocent 1970s Singapore soon descends into a darker and agonising story of a former St Joseph's Institution boy, now a female exotic dancer in Paris, as she fights for acceptance by family and Singapore society. Passionate, tormented and raw.
SYNOPSIS	This is the true story of a long-vanished Singapore and the dangerous carnival known as Bugis Street. James Eckardt cut a raffish figure as he stepped off a yacht at Clifford Pier in Singapore on March 30, 1975, en route from Manila to Jakarta. Little did he know that he would become enchanted by a fun-loving Singaporean nymph named Milly, who would take him in hand to explore the exotic wonders of her city. The fun would turn into hopeless love, one Eckardt would desperately chronicle in a 36-hour, drug-laced writing spree and entitle "Singapore Girl". The yellowing carbon copy would sit in an envelope for thirty years. And then on December 19, 2004, an email arrived that would lead Eckardt to discover what had happened to the Singapore girl, who, at the time he had loved her, had not technically been female.
MAIN CHARACTERS	
James	Bohemian American who must come to terms with falling in love with a transsexual, losing her, then discovering her fate.
Milly	Born a Tamil boy in Singapore, becomes a pre-op transsexual sex worker in flamboyant Bugis Street, has gender reassignment surgery in Europe, returns to Singapore to make peace with her family. Viewers will fall in love with Milly, empathising with her plight.
the Frenchman	James' nemesis who wins Milly's heart but decades later makes contact with James and provides the backstory of her life.
ENDING	As James and the Frenchman both did, viewers will fall in love with Milly, a fun-loving girl of pure heart, whose only fault was to be born the wrong gender and in a society unaccustomed then to transgender people despite Bugis Street being known worldwide. Viewers will enjoy a rollercoaster ride of highs and lows as Milly's story unfolds, all of which makes the final scene so utterly devastating as Milly returns to Singapore, fails to make peace with her family, climbs to the roof of their HDB block and jumps.
NOTE	A screen adaptation could lose the drugs and some of the edginess to appeal to a mass audience, and play on the moving love story, unusual historical setting and tragic ending.



BOOK DETAILS

AUTHOR	James Eckardt
ISBN	9789810562342
PUBLISHER	Monsoon Books
PUB DATE	2006
GENRE	Memoir
AGE RANGE	General adult

Author Information

Ex-seminarian and ex-civil rights volunteer, James Eckardt joined the Peace Corps in the West African country of Sierra Leone, after which he embarked on a trans-African motorcycle trip. After a second stint in the Peace Corps, planting sugar cane in the Brazilian Amazon, he joined a friend in Manila for a two-thousand-mile sailboat trip to Jakarta. A stopover in Singapore led him into the bawdy spectacle of 1970s Bugis Street – a world long vanished today.

Praise

'I was fascinated by *Singapore Girl*, a love story like no other ... bizarre and oddly moving.' Paul Theroux, author

'With all the angst of a Dylan song, beautiful, raw and honest – it's a story that will stay with you.' NTUC *Lifestyle* magazine, Singapore